

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A fruit-based product that comprises carboxymethyl cellulose (CMC), wherein the CMC is characterized by forming a gel at 25°C after high-shear dissolution in a 0.3 wt% aqueous sodium chloride solution, the final content of the CMC in the aqueous sodium chloride solution being 1 wt% for a CMC having a degree of polymerization (DP) of >4,000, 1.5 wt% for a CMC having a DP of 3,000-4,000, 2 wt% for a CMC having a DP of 1,500-<3,000, and 4 wt% for a CMC having a DP of <1,500, the gel being a fluid having a storage modulus (G') which exceeds the loss modulus (G'') over the entire frequency region of 0.01-10 Hz when measured on an oscillatory rheometer operating at a strain of 0.2.
2. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1, wherein the CMC has a Brookfield viscosity of more than 9,000 mPa.s after high-shear dissolution in a 0.3 wt% aqueous sodium chloride solution, the final content of the CMC in the aqueous sodium chloride solution being 1 wt% for a CMC having a degree of polymerization (DP) of >4,000, 1.5 wt% for a CMC having a DP of >3,000-4,000, 2 wt% for a CMC having a DP of 1,500-3,000, and 4 wt% for a CMC having a DP of <1,500.
3. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1 wherein the pH of the fruit-based product is between 1 and 6.
4. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1 wherein the CMC has a DP of 1,500 or more.
5. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 4 wherein the CMC is prepared from linters cellulose or wood cellulose.
6. (currently amended) The fruit-based product of ~~of~~-claim 1 wherein the CMC has a DS of 0.6 to 1.2.

7. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1 wherein the fruit-based product is a jam, a fruit preserve, a pie filling, a fruity sauce, a fruity filling in bakery products, a fruit-based topping, a beverage comprising fruit, a jelly or a sweet.
8. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1 wherein the CMC is used in combination with pectin, carrageenan, starch, alginate, xanthan, konjac, locust bean gum, guar gum, or food protein.
9. (previously presented) The fruit-based product of claim 1 wherein the CMC is used in an amount of 0.05 to 1.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the fruit-based product.